

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. May 1948

SUBJECT Troop Increases in Border Area;
Aerial Supply Exercises at Jüterbog

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1. Osterwieck, Ilseburg (107/06): These communities were evacuated by Soviet dependents on 5 March 1948. Since that time, additional housing has been requisitioned. Evacuation of the German tenants appears to be made at the discretion of the Kreis commandant; Germans in Quedlinburg (D95) were given 24 hours notice and permitted to take beds and bedding with them; in Osterwieck and Ilseburg they were ousted in two hours and allowed to take nothing at all. It is rumored in this area that a former labor camp near Nordhausen is currently occupied by a Siberian rifle division.
2. Zossen (291): Approximately two infantry regiments, with mortars, horses, and field kitchens among their equipment, arrived on 25-27 March.
3. Windsdorf (291): New cable lines were being set up by a communications company on 25-27 March. All air raid alarms in the area have been overhauled and nightly alerts have been held for troops. So far the local inhabitants have not participated in these alerts, but the Bürgermeister has been warned that these have been scheduled for the near future. On 10 April, the local commander, Colonel Pelgrin, informed the German administration that approximately 20,000 troops were expected to arrive in the Windsdorf area. All dance halls, schools, and empty barns have been requisitioned.
4. Jüterbog (B69): On or about 1 April, a Soviet air transport unit arrived in Jüterbog. It consists of three squadrons of 35 planes each. Daily exercises in supply dropping began on 3 April. The entire unit participated on 7 April. The aircraft approach the target area - the former artillery firing grounds - in high altitude waves, diving in groups of nine planes at a time to approximately 100 meters from the ground before dropping their loads. Double parachutes are used. Three types of containers were observed: a cylinder three to five meters in height, a sphere, and a third shaped like a coffin. These exercises have produced the usual rumors that parachute troops are in the area.

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